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would seem impossible for general students to use it with any success unless they are constantly assisted by a teacher who has abundant information upon the many points that are omitted. Such a brief key often proves very helpful in the laboratory of the person who devises it, since the teacher may supplement as fully as is necessary, but for accurate identification of plants of any group in any general and independent way, more explicit and comprehensive descriptions are necessary.

O. W. C.

When Should a Child Begin School? By W. H. WINCH. Baltimore: Warwick and York, 1911. Pp. 96.

The question put in the title is investigated by comparing the advancement in school of pupils who have entered at different ages. In England, where the study was made, the child may enter school at the age of three and is required by law to enter at the age of five—though some children enter after five because they receive instruction at home or because of neglect. The early years are spent in an infant department. A child is advanced to the grades (or “standards”) when he reaches the proper age irrespective of the length of time he has spent in the infant department. The amount of advancement or retardation of a particular child was measured by the number of months by which he was younger or older than the standard for his grade. With this form of measurement it was found that of the children who entered before five years of age there was no difference in the advancement of those who entered early as compared with those who entered later. Those who entered after five were possibly somewhat retarded in comparison with those who entered before five. No difference was found also in the standing in examinations or the deportment or attentiveness of those who entered early or late.

Since this result seemed somewhat surprising (and to the infant-department teachers, discouraging) the author inquired whether it might be due to the fact that children from “poor” homes entered early, in the main, and thus brought down the average of the group of those who entered early. This supposition was not found to be true. We are left with the conclusion, therefore, that entrance before five does not give the child an advantage in his subsequent school career. The investigation seems to have been carefully made and the results justify the author in his conclusion. It is still possible, however, that there is a type of training, different from that given in the infant departments, which would be of advantage to the child in his later school career.

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